

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SAIGON 00403 130635Z

17

ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 H-01 INR-07 L-01 PM-03 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 CIAE-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 DODE-00 RSC-01

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R 130347Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1801

INFO USDEL JEC PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 403

LIMDIS

FOLLOWING MSG SENT ACTION SAIGON 11 JAN 75 BEING REPEATED TO YOU

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L DANANG 0029

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, VS

SUBJECT: GENERAL TRUONG'S VIEWS CONCERNING LOSS OF PHUOC BINH

1. I MET WITH MR-1/I VORPS COMMANDER, LT. GEN. NGO QUANG TRUONG, JANUARY 11 AND ASKED HIM HIS VIEWS CONCERNING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LOSS OF PHUOC BINH. TRUONG SAID THE LOSS IS "PSYCHOLOGICAL; IT IS LESS SERIOUS MILITARILY." ASKED THE REACTION OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC IN MILITARY REGION 1. TRUONG SAID, REGISTERING MILD DISMAY, THAT "MORALE HERE IS NOT AFFECTED" BY PHUOC BINH", WHICH TO THE PEOPLE OF CENTRAL VIET NAM SEEMS "FAR AWAY". WHEN QUANG TRI FELL IN 1972, THE POPULAR REACTION WAS DIFFERENT BECAUSE THE THREAT WAS CLOSE AT HAND AND THE CITY WAS FLOODED WITH PEOPLE FLEEING THE BATTLE, WHICH IS NOT THE SITUATION NOW.

2. TRUONG THEN RAISED THE SUBJECT OF WHAT HE TERMED THE "POLITICAL" CONFIDENTIAL

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REACTION TO PHUOC BINH. SPEAKING WITH FEELING, HE SAID THAT "NEWS-

PAPERS, RUMOR, POLITICIANS ARE SAYING THAT PHUOC BINH WAS LOST
BECAUSE OF CORRUPTION, GHOST SOLDIERS. THEY MAKE NO MENTION
OF THE HEAVY ENEMY PRESSURE." HE CONVEYED THE IMPRESSION THAT THIS
IS UNFAIR: "CORRUPTION IS MUCH LESS NOW THAN IT WAS TWO OR THREE
YEARS AGO. PEOPLE ARE MAKING EFFORTS TO DO THEIR JOBS. THEY ARE
MAKING SACRIFICES." FOR EXAMPLE, TRUONG SAID THAT THE CRITICS
"PAY NO ATTENTION TO THE SACRIFICES OF THE AIRBORNE, WHO LOST 6000
KILLED AND 2000 WOUNDED TAKING THE HIGH GROUND OVERLOOKING DAI LOC."

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UNQUOTE

MARTIN

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